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THE BIRTH, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION
OF CHRIST AND THE DESCENT OF THE
HOLY-GHOST UPON THE APOSTLES,

CONSIDERED IN

FOUR SERMONS,

PREACHED ON

CHRISTMAS-DAY, GOOD-FRIDAY,

AND

EASTER AND WHIT-SUNDAYS.

N.

BY JOHN DISNEY, L. L. B.

RECTOR OF PANTON, AND VICAR OF SWINDERBY
LINCOLNSHIRE,

L O N D O N :

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MDCCLXXI.

THE FIRST OF THE ANTIQUARIAN
SOCIETY OF LONDON
HOLD A COLLECTION OF THE
ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY OF LONDON

CONTAINED IN

FOUR SERMONS

PREACHED BY

THE REV. JOHN DISNEY, D.D.
CHRISTIANITY



EASTER AND WHITSUNDAYS

BY JOHN DISNEY, D.D.

RECTOR OF LONDON AND VICAR OF ST. MARTIN'S
IN THE CITY OF LONDON

LONDON

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TO THE
LEARNED AND CONSCIENTIOUS,
THE
CLERGY and the GENTLEMEN

Of the several Professions of

CIVIL-LAW and PHYSIC,

ASSOCIATED,

For obtaining Relief in the Mat-
ter of Subscription to the LITURGY
and the XXXIX ARTICLES of the
Church of England.

GENTLEMEN,

However distant a connec-
tion the following dis-
courses may have, with the
I truly

6 DEDICATION.

truly great and good design set on foot, conducted, and supported by You,---yet, as they are the result of unprejudiced enquiry, and the exercise of that liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free,---you are necessarily their patrons.---The author does not wish to conceal,--though the confession may expose him to reproach,---the singular satisfaction of mind arising from the part which he has taken in the common cause,---or, the honour he takes to himself, from inscribing these early productions of his retirement,---

DEDICATION. 87

ment,---to men, professedly,
embarked in the cause of the
gospel, of truth and righteousness ;---to men, in whose councils, is much wisdom,---and in
whose deliberations, christian
charity and moderation, have
been the distinguishing characteristics.--May the God of peace,
preserve you in the same temper and disposition,---and give
you perseverance unto the end!--
May HE bless your endeavours in
the work whereunto ye were
called, by firmly fixing the pure
gospel of his Son in these islands,
without the alloy of human additions!---

8 DEDICATION.

ditions!---These are the earnest
wishes and prayers of him,---
who professes himself,

Gentlemen,

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

and

Fellow-labourer,

Swinderby,

August 31,

1771.

JOHN DISNEY.

S E R M O N I.

CHRISTMAS-DAY.

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LUKE ii.—10, 11.

THE ANGEL SAID UNTO THEM, FEAR NOT, FOR BEHOLD, I BRING YOU GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY, WHICH SHALL BE TO ALL PEOPLE.—FOR UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY, IN THE CITY OF DAVID, A SAVIOUR WHICH IS CHRIST THE LORD.

THOUGH the Jewish nation expected a Messiah, about the time that our Saviour was born into the world; though they knew he was to be of the seed of ABRAHAM—of the tribe of JUDAH, and the House of DAVID—Yet, by the grossest misinterpretations of the prophetical books of the Old Testament, they looked for him in the character of a mighty monarch,—a Prince of this world.—Their indolence

made them unfit for rational enquiry—their vices averse to it—consequently—to have gained their approbation — Christianity should have worn a different complexion, and its great master have been a person of a quite contrary cast. — To have been readily received, it should have been more pliant to the prejudices which had so unfortunately persuaded the Jews, that they were to continue the peculiar favourites of Heaven, under the *expected ruler of their sceptre*,—it should have been more favourable to those very vices—which it was sent to redress.—Had the blessed Jesus appeared in sovereign pomp and power, instead of distinguishing himself by his humility, his gentleness and moderation :—Had he been possessed of riches—cloathed in purple—and fared sumptuously—instead of being poor, and the son of a carpenter.—Had the place which first

re-

received him been a palace, instead of a stable—Nay, had his mercy and justice given way to an unrelenting severity—his charity and benevolence to the pride and reserve of an eastern monarch.—Then, would he have been one after their own hearts;—then would these infatuated people have thought that he brought with him more evident marks, of his being sent from Heaven, than when he came accompanied with such real and convincing evidences of his divine mission!—can it now be thought uncharitable to conclude—*They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

Surely it will not be going beyond the line of truth—to assert, that every sober and rational enquirer will be satisfied with the evidences, which confirm the doctrine of CHRIST and his Apostles.—Tho' in these latter days,
every

every new objection, which the wit of man could suggest, has been managed with the greatest dexterity ;—old and exploded ones, have been disguised, and offered to us anew :—Yet we have this comfort, that as the enemies of the Christian cause have increased — her advocates have also multiplied more abundantly.—And in defiance of all the attacks of infidelity, the foundations of Christianity remain unshaken.

The Religion of the Jews, as they made it, was carnal—they preferred the ritual law to the moral ;—they thought that the whole law was of perpetual obligation ;—that MOSES was the greatest of all the prophets ; — that they should withhold the common offices of humanity from the Gentiles ;— that there was no harm in bad designs, unless they were put in execution ; — that purity
con-

consisted in bodily and ritual purifications ; — and that no Israelite would be deprived of future happiness—whatever his faults had been—unless he was guilty of apostacy—idolatry—and a few other crimes which they specified.—Now, the religion of the Gospel is spiritual ;—places morality above Rites and Ceremonies ; —teaches that JOHN the Baptist was a Prophet greater than all who had preceded CHRIST, yet inferior to the least of his disciples in dignity of office. — The Gospel directs them to love all men ; — to avoid none, but for immorality ;—Condemns evil inclinations and thoughts, as well as evil actions — and requires purity of heart ; promises eternal happiness to those who would lead religious lives—and to impenitent sinners denounceth the

the most dreadful punishments.*——

Besides this striking contrast—from whence, the superiority of the Gospel covenant to the Mosaic dispensation, appears most eminently—let me ask—Were there not plain predictions of the coming of the Messiah in the writings of their favourites—MOSES and the Prophets?—Might they not there have found, that he was to be *a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief?*—And did not the public council of the Jews cause this prophecy to be most rigidly fulfilled?—Did not JOHN the Baptist more immediately precede the Lord of life, and declare unto all, that his coming was at hand — Yet these, with abundance of other evidences, which might be brought together — joined to the fit-

* See the learned Dr. Jortin's excellent Discourses concerning the Truth of the Christian Religion.—chap. i.

ness of the time — the Jews regarded not; — Not, even so far, as to give him a favorable reception at his first appearance in the world, 'till his life and doctrine should establish the truth, or declare the fraud.

They further objected, — that he condescended to converse with people of bad reputation—*with publicans and sinners.*—But should it now be asked, Why he thus condescended to hold converse with them? — The querist need but look back to that part of the New Testament where the circumstance itself is related, and he will there find a most rational account of the whole matter — truly with a view to their repentance and amendment.—*They that be whole, need not a Physician, but they that are sick. — I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance* — was our Saviour's own reasoning and reply.— They also add, that he was of NA-

NAZARETH—that he had dwelt in GALILEE; — that, from his education, he could not acquire the learning necessary to be a teacher—and that he hinted that he was a much greater person than they imagined—therefore they called him a Blasphemer.

In answer to these cavils and subterfuges,—we reply,—that, the journey which JOSEPH and MARY took from NAZARETH to BETHLEHEM to be taxed, was a more extraordinary fulfilling of the prophecy, than if they had lived there. — As to his parents being GALILEANS, and himself afterwards living at NAZARETH—nothing but the most violent bigotry could have urged this as an objection. — The Jews abominated the Gentiles, not because of their vices, but because they followed not the law of MOSES.—They were, in this respect, like the Romanists at this day, whose first principle is that of keep-
ing

ing no Faith with such as the Papal see shall pronounce Heretics.—That our Saviour's education did not furnish him with learning sufficient to be a teacher—is an argument which may be retorted upon them with double force.—The peculiar interposition of God appears on the very face of the objection.—Something of the same nature, when, they say, he hinted—that he was a much greater person than they imagined. — Was not this very act—an act of goodness and mercy?—Was not this returning good for evil? — He went further — obstinate and perverse as he found them — his patience was not worn out — after plain and positive precepts, he gently rebukes them by repeated insinuations, that he was CHRIST—the Saviour of the world — the only Son of God. — In his answers, there is no self-sufficiency — a constant acknowledged inferiority to the Father of all.—

all.—He vaunted not himself. — *I am not come to do mine own will (says he) but the will of him that sent me.*

But more particularly to his birth. — In the Gospel history we find a very ample account of our Lord's nativity. A few shepherds, intent on their employment in the fields, the care of their flocks — were directed to the place where they might find the new-born infant — they were told in a vision, while *the glory of the Lord shone about them*, — that they might know him, by his being placed in a manger, and wrapped in swadling cloaths. — Why, it may be asked, was he lain in a stable? — because in consequence of the decree from CÆSAR AUGUSTUS, a certain part of his empire repaired to BETHLEHEM, in JUDEA, to pay their tax. — JOSEPH, with MARY his wife, *great with child*, were of the number who left their houses, and repaired to BETHLEHEM, in compliance

ance with the edict of their sovereign.—These poor shepherds readily attended to the directions of their guide, and to the advice of their invisible instructor.—They found him thus circumstanced—his mother MARY and JOSEPH his reputed father standing by.—They were astonished, and well they might—but they were convinced — for they glorified and praised God for this great act of goodness towards the race of man.—They made known to the neighbouring people, the revelation which had sent them thither, and the confirmation which the event gave to it. — The wise men sung their songs of praise and thanksgiving, and declared him to be *a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel.*

The good providence of God counteracted the wicked designs of HEROD. — He falsely imagining that a rival for the government of ISRAEL was born
into

into the world — had recourse to the first expedient which his policy dictated.—The attempt was first to be made on his person, under pretence of *worshipping him* — but *the wise men being warned in a dream, returned into their own country another way.*—Thus disappointed in the first effort—violence was to do—what subtilty could not reach.—In the height of his anger and resentment; — *he sent forth and slew all the children that were in BETHLEHEM, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under.*—An infallible step, no doubt, in the opinion of this wretched possessor of the Jewish sceptre. — Heaven, however, ordered it otherwise — and the designs of HEROD were again frustrated.—JOSEPH was apprised, by an angel, of the danger of the *holy child JESUS.*—His tender affections were awakened — *he departed by night, and fled into Egypt.*—Several thousand inno-

innocent babes fell a sacrifice to the lust of power ; — and not till HEROD died—did JESUS return into ISRAEL. — When this merciless tyrant had ended his wretched being—JOSEPH and his family visited once more their own country—agreeable to the admonition of the Lord.

The miraculous preservation of CHRIST, in the various successive events of his life, 'till the fullness of time, was a continuation of the same Almighty goodness, which sent him into the world ; — and the suffering him to die the death of the cross — was the completion of his unlimited mercy and benevolence for the whole race of ADAM.

Now we have taken this short, but general view of the circumstances of the nativity of our Lord ; — let us indulge in the reflections natural on such an occasion. — Let the effusions of our hearts pay the grateful tribute — the

—the pleasing sacrifice.—Let us receive the tender and warm impressions, which, so great love for man, must make upon us, and for a few moments give loose to those emotions which, as Christians, should be our happiness and our glory.

Shall we then not laud and magnify that name, which is above every other name?—Who can refrain from prostrating himself before the throne of Heaven—when the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, dwelleth there—the Creator of us, and all that we behold.—Him, who sent his only begotten Son into the world to save us;—through whose mediation we shall find justice, tempered with mercy—*for should he be extreme to mark what is done amiss—Who could abide it?*—The humiliation of his Son is the greatest possible evidence of his love—and the whole Christian scheme, of his most perfect wisdom. — Far gone in
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sin and wickedness — blind to the worship of the one true God — Whither would our infatuation have led us, had we not had the very seasonable assistance of the laws of Christ's Gospel? — How can we sufficiently contemplate his great goodness, when we remember that the Apostle of his Son hath told us — that *life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel.* — A knowledge of a future state! — How great is the comfort! — During a life of trials and disappointments, how pleasing and satisfactory is the prospect of eternity! — In a probationary state — our object placed before our eyes — our labours will be seconded by encouragement — and rewarded with what perfect wisdom and goodness shall determine, and what infinite power can effect.

“ THUS he, who was to his own
people formerly the *Lord of Hosts*—
“ a mighty God, and terrible—jeal-
D “ ous,

"ous, and avenging ; and whose
 "worship was stiled, *fear* (a worship
 "well accommodated to such a peo-
 "ple) is now to men of more en-
 "larged minds—under this propor-
 "tionably more indulgent dispensa-
 "tion—*The God of all joy and con-*
 "*solation ; — the Father of mercies —*
 "whose children and heirs we are
 "said to be ; — whom we are taught
 "to approach in a more liberal way,
 "with a true filial assurance ; — whose
 "darling attribute is goodness ; — and
 "the first principle, and great com-
 "mandment in his law—the end and
 "completion of it—Love."†—What
 an admirable and striking contrast may
 we observe in the whole tenor of our
 LORD's conduct and behaviour.—By
 turns, as occasion required, we see his

† Bishop Law's Reflections on the life and
 character of Christ (towards the end of his the-
 ory of religion) p. 294, 5th Edit.

greatness and humility,—his dignity and self-abasement.—At one time his power is most conspicuous,—at another,—he is meek and lowly.—Every variation happily adapted to the occasion.—Again,—“ sometimes reminding his followers, that he could command legions of angels, were it necessary; at others, apprising them, that he should be more destitute of common conveniences, than even the beasts of the field, or the birds of the air;—now telling them, that a greater than SOLOMON is amongst them;—now, washing his disciples feet:—conscious of his own power, and just prerogative, yet all submission to the powers in being;—complying with their laws and institutions, however hazardous or inconvenient to him; and paying their demands to the uttermost, though at the expence

“ of a miracle.—On some occasions,
 “ publishing the character and of-
 “ fice which he bore; on others,
 “ carefully concealing them;—in or-
 “ der to prevent the hasty miscon-
 “ struction of his friends;—to guard
 “ against the inveterate malice of his
 “ foes; and gain sufficient time to fix
 “ a good foundation for the faith of
 “ all.—None more industrious and
 “ zealous in the cause of God;—
 “ none more indifferent and resigned
 “ in his own:—he patiently endures
 “ the affronts and outrage to his per-
 “ son, and the frequent insults on his
 “ reputation; and intercedes for the
 “ forgiveness of his murderers:—
 “ Yet, when his father’s honor is
 “ concerned, he vindicates it instant-
 “ ly, and with uncommon warmth.
 “ —He publicly chastises the pro-
 “ phaners of the Temple; and threa-
 “ tens the severest punishment to
 “ such as would continue to blas-
 “ pheme

“ pheme the power and spirit by
 “ which he was acting. — He is ready
 “ to receive publicans and harlots ; —
 “ disdains not to converse with Here-
 “ tics and Schismatics ; — persons
 “ most odious, and of the worst re-
 “ pute ; — but whom he sees to be
 “ truly penitent, and really desirous
 “ of instruction ; — while he rejects
 “ the formal sanctimonious hypocrite ;
 “ and reprimands the self-sufficient
 “ pharisee. — He detects, and, with
 “ authority, rebukes the flattery of
 “ the proud designing querist ; but
 “ satisfies each scruple, and resolves
 “ each doubt, of the sincere and
 “ humble searcher after truth, even
 “ before they can be intimated to
 “ him. — He cherishes the broken-
 “ hearted ; — comforts the despond-
 “ ing ; — strengthens and supports the
 “ weak and wavering ; — condescends
 “ to the infirmities of the meanest,
 “ and most despicable, that has the
 “ least

“ least spark of goodness in him ; —
 “ but never gratifies the vanity, or
 “ gives way to the petulancy of the
 “ greatest.—Vice, from him, meets
 “ with due discouragement, and just
 “ reproof in all men, even those of
 “ the highest station ;—virtue, with
 “ kind compassion, and a generous
 “ aid, in any of the lowest.” §

To conclude ;— the advantages of
 the birth and incarnation of the Son
 of God, were not to be confined to
 the Jewish nation.—Far wide was the
 Gospel Dispensation to be extended.
 —Whoever shall take up the Cross of
 CHRIST and follow him ;—Whoever
 shall set him up for their pattern,
 and regulate their lives by the tenor
 of his most righteous laws—shall in-
 herit the kingdom prepared for them,
 against the consummation of all things.

§ See Bishop Law's Considerations, p. 198.

—Let,

—Let, then, the commemoration of our blessed LORD's nativity, fill our hearts with joy and gratitude. — Let our tongues speak his praise, and let our hearts approve the deed. — Let us not be contented with appearances alone, which may deceive others, and more fatally so, ourselves. — Let not an outward display of extraordinary sanctity supplant true piety, and an internal religious disposition. — Let us rend our hearts and not our garments, and turn unto the one only true invisible God. — To him let us ascribe every perfect attribute. — To him let us address our praises and thanksgivings, for the greatest of gifts to man. — Adopt not pharisaical hypocrisy ;— remember he *searcheth us out, and knoweth us ; he knoweth our sitting down, and uprising, he understandeth our thoughts.* — He is about our path and about our bed ; and *spieth out all*
our

our ways.—To him, therefore, whom
eye hath not seen—who reigneth su-
preme in Heaven and on Earth, be
ascribed Majesty and Dominion for
ever.

END of SERMON I.

S E R M O N II.

GOOD-FRIDAY.

(1841)

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JOHN xix.—Part of 30.

IT IS FINISHED.

ST. JOHN, towards the conclusion of his gospel, hath given us; the dying words of the Lord of life.—After we have been told the many indignities which were offered him, and the sufferings which he bore.—We yet find him altogether consistent.—His power apparently kept pace with his pretensions.—Though the pains of death took hold upon him, his perseverance in the cause in which he was embarked, remained unshaken.—With what calmness and composure did he breathe his last! *Forgive them, for they know not what they do,*—was the last petition he sent up to the Father of all.—In perfect charity with his most bitter enemies, even with those, whose behaviour disgraced humanity.—A thief was placed on

(188)

THE
HISTORY
OF
THE
CITY
OF
NEW
YORK

FROM
THE
FIRST
SETTLEMENT
TO
THE
PRESENT
TIME

BY
JOHN
B. HENRY

VOLUME
I
NEW
YORK
PUBLISHED
BY
J. B. HENRY
1880

JOHN xix.—Part of 30.

IT IS FINISHED.

ST. JOHN, towards the conclusion of his gospel, hath given us; the dying words of the Lord of life.—After we have been told the many indignities which were offered him; and the sufferings which he bore.—We yet find him altogether consistent.—His power apparently kept pace with his pretensions.—Though the pains of death took hold upon him, his perseverance in the cause in which he was embarked, remained unshaken.—With what calmness and composure did he breathe his last! *Forgive them, for they know not what they do*,—was the last petition he sent up to the Father of all.—In perfect charity with his most bitter enemies, even with those, whose behaviour disgraced humanity.—A thief was placed on

either side,—he was spit upon,—scoffed at, and reviled.—In the agonies of a lingering death, nothing was heard from among the crowd assembled, but sneers of reproach and of contempt.—No sooner did expiring nature, begin to sink under the punishment, than he asked for some support:—He cried out, *I thirst.*—Behold the return he met with from his ungenerous persecutors,—whose hearts were seared against every sentiment of compassion.—There was *a vessel filled with vinegar*, ready at hand for the purpose,—*they dipped a sponge into it, put it upon hyssop, and gave him to drink.*—How loathsome a draught, at any time;—under the pains of the cross, how intolerable!—Indeed no act of barbarity, or of unrelenting cruelty, which could make his last moments more grievous, seems to have been wanting, in the gratification of their malice against him.

him.—All that he afterwards said, was,
—It is finished, he then bowed his head,
and gave up the ghost.—No one surely
 was ever more resigned!—Words
 could not be more concise, yet more
 expressive!—We may thus paraphrase
 it, and suppose him to have said—
 ‘ The worst you can do to me, is
 ‘ now at an end;—here my troubles
 ‘ cease.—I have passed through the
 ‘ trial of men;—I have suffered all
 ‘ that the excess of bigotry could
 ‘ prompt you to,—the ignominious
 ‘ death, which you are used to inflict
 ‘ on the basest and most abandoned
 ‘ criminals.—The design of my
 ‘ mission is now, however, complet-
 ‘ ed.—I had power to have kept
 ‘ myself in life, notwithstanding all
 ‘ that the utmost malice of men
 ‘ could have done to destroy me.—
 ‘ For this commandment I received
 ‘ of the Father.—And I do now re-
 ‘ sign that life,—the disposal of
 which,

which he has put into my hands,
 till I have spent it for your good,
 and effected every thing which the
 wisdom of my heavenly Father
 appointed to be done for your sal-
 vation.—Every circumstance at-
 tending my birth, life and death,
 have most amply fulfilled the
 prophecies which you received,
 ages ago, of my coming.—The
 time is now, when you may hear
 with your ears;—see with your
 eyes, and understand with your
 senses.—You must truly be a stub-
 born and perverse people, if your
 faith will not acknowledge me;
 and if your lives do not imitate
 the virtue, which my example
 hath set before you.—I have com-
 pleted the office of redemption.—
 They, who know me,—believe in,
 and follow me, shall be subjects of
my kingdom, which is not of this
world.—

‘ world.—But they who know, yet
 ‘ believe not in me, who follow not
 ‘ the righteous doctrines which I
 ‘ have taught, the bright example
 ‘ which I have placed before them,
 ‘ and reject the revelation which I
 ‘ have made known unto them, of
 ‘ the will of God my Father, who
 ‘ hath sent me,—shall receive from
 ‘ the King of Kings, and Lord of
 ‘ Lords,—the Judge of all men,—
 ‘ the greater condemnation.’

This is the obvious and natural
 meaning of our Lord’s last words
 before he resigned his life into the
 hands of him, who gave it.—How
 then ought we to praise our Almighty
 and merciful God,—him who sent
 forth his best beloved for the re-
 demption of mankind!—Shall we
 not join with the psalmist, and say,
Let Israel rejoice in him who made him;
let the children of Sion be joyful in their
king.—Let them praise his name in the

dance: Let them sing praises unto him with tabret and harp.—For the Lord hath pleasure in his people. Let the saints be joyful with glory. Let the praises of God be in their mouths.

Consult a grateful heart, and the line of our duty will be easily described.—No part of it will appear disagreeable, or disgusting;—all, when viewed by impartial reason will be amiable and engaging.—It will be a tribute more pleasing, than burdensome:—A business, which we would readily set ourselves about, rather than stand indifferent spectators.

Though the mission of our Lord, was an event, for which, we have the greatest possible reason, to thank and bless God.—Yet once for all,—let this be remembered,—that, as the sincere Christian,—the true follower of the lamb,—is under every tie of gratitude and interest to adore and
worship

worship the LORD of heaven and earth for so distinguished a mark of his mercy and loving kindness;—The wilful and obstinate unbeliever,—*they who see the light, but prefer darkness, rather than light*,—their guilt will be doubly increased, and their pardon without the pale of his mercy.—The unenlightened Indian,—the ignorant and untaught heathen, will be more acceptable before God,—than he who had every opportunity of enjoying the revelation of his will, by his only Son, and neglected or despised the advantages which were offered him.—An unavoidable ignorance, is innocence,—but that perverse individual who knoweth his master's will, and regardeth it not,—on his head will the wrath of God fall in double portions.

We, of this age and this country have nothing to plead in excuse for

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our ignorance.—We enjoy the benefit of a reformation from the errors and superstitions of popery, in a more pure degree, than any of our neighbours on the continent!—That volume, in which we may read everything necessary to salvation, is open to every poor man's inspection!—The bible, which alone is the religion of protestants, is fairly and honestly (in the most material passages, accurately) translated to the hands of the unlearned!—It is not read to them, in the public service of the church, in an unknown tongue, as in the case of the Romanists at this day!—Christians, who make the written word of God, the test of their orthodoxy, glory in being left to use their own senses, free from restraint and imposition!—When once they give up the sufficiency of holy scripture, in whatever is necessary to salvation;—that instant they renounce protestantism,

tism, and become a disgrace to those of their fore-fathers, who bought this inestimable privilege with all that was most dear to them;—they who made a sacrifice of their fortunes,—and sealed their doctrines with their blood.

While our thoughts are confined to the death and sufferings of our Redeemer, it will by no means be foreign to the purpose, to pay some attention to the tenets and principles of a sect, which hath of late years taken its rise among us.—All saving faith alone, is their leading doctrine;—and they have, I trust, succeeded in most of their conversions, *more by strength of voice than strength of understanding*.—Many of their deluded followers have given up their senses, and their reason, to the flights of an overheated imagination.—And this is the only truly culpable part of their conduct.

—Indeed, while they claim inward illumination for their guide,—they are but consistent, not to stoop to the common methods of reasoning.—But, should rational beings thus renounce that superior property, which is emphatically called,—*the image of God*?—Should they be supposed to have received the gift of inspiration, whose proof rests on their bare assertion?—they who bring not the least consistent evidence of their having any concern with the Holy Spirit?—hath not this been the game of MAHOMET?—hath it not also been notoriously played by the legendary saints in the Roman Calendar?—It cannot fairly be put as a question,—Where is the difference between the enthusiasm of popery and of methodism?—because, their most perfect harmony hath been demonstrated.*

* See bishop Lavington's very sensible and ingenious parallel in three pamphlets, entitled, *The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists, compared.*

So exact a copy is the latter of the former, that one is almost inclined to think,—did not charity forbid it—that in those instances,—the papists were the original from which the outlines of methodism were drawn.—Hitherto no laws have been enacted against them,—God forbid there should be any.—They have the same right to their opinions, which we have to ours,—and equally as good a claim to argue in favour of, as we to disprove their several distinguishing doctrines.—As yet, we are both protestants,—and should acknowledge the same authority, as the arbiter of our differences.—A dispassionate examination of our bibles should characterize the disputants on both sides, and which ever way, conviction falls, there let the disciples follow,—for that should be their religion.—So long as the civil government is not affected by the principles of either,
the

the one surely hath as good a right to a full toleration, as the other to an establishment.—For though the favorite arguments drawn from *the alliance*, may be *legal*,—they may yet be *unchristian*.

It shall, however, suffice to consider only one of their principles,—because it may, at this time, appear more striking by being unscriptural.—Who can satisfy himself that the temperance,—the charity,—the forgiveness,—the mercy,—the benevolence, and lastly,—the patience, the resignation of the lord of life, were to stand us in no stead?—These uniform excellencies were surely set before us for our example.—Our reason would tell us so much,—nay! himself hath assured us of it. Did our great master live and die for nothing, but to try our faith in mere facts?—Shall our expiring Lord leave plain characters of our duty,—merely to excite our wonder

wonder and astonishment?—Were all the transactions, as of this day, to be placed to no other account, than as matter of speculation?—To very little purpose must he have died, if solely to try our credulity.—Is it any way probable, that an institution,—which is so admirably well contrived for the well-being of every state,—the eternal happiness of every individual, was intended as a mere shadow,—as something to be believed, rather than followed?—After all this,—shall good works be excluded and faith alone received?—That it is an easier matter to give credit to the truth of christianity, than to practise its precepts, I readily grant,—but, that it was designed by our Saviour, as a matter of belief only, let me recommend it to you to consult reason for the probable—and revelation itself for the positive answer.—Besides, how little influence,—I had nearly said, how

how great danger, that religion must bring upon society,—which imposes no one social virtue!—How trifling an awe over the lives of the vicious, which says, By faith, alone shall man be saved!

These few interrogatories, may of themselves serve as a guard against intemperate zeal in religious matters.—They deserve, at least, some attention;—if after a scrutiny they should be insufficient for the purpose, for which they were put;—he that remains unconvinced, will be a methodist from principle,—a better ground by far, than if he had rested his tenets on an irresistible or a secret impulse.—What our blessed LORD taught by his apostles, he intended for the statute book of our lives. And by his own example, declared to us, the practicability of every virtue. Though our best endeavours, will doubtless fall short of his great and glorious
 perfection

perfections — yet, by a continual contention with the works of the flesh, — by striving to *be perfect, as he is perfect*, is the most likely method of bringing ourselves to his heavenly kingdom.—And the merciful judge of all men, will make large allowances for the failings of our nature, though, he will not forgive wilful blindness, or the perversion of the abilities which he hath given us to know, and to distinguish; and the opportunities of performing our duty.

—*Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? Even he that leadeth an uncorrupt life, and doth the thing which is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart.—He that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour, and hath not slandered his neighbour.*

—*He that setteth not by himself; but is lowly in his own eyes.—In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he*

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*honoureth them, that fear the Lord.—
He that hath clean hands and a pure
heart, and hath not lift up his soul unto
vanity.—He shall receive the blessing
from the Lord, and righteousness from
the God of his salvation.*

Let us but place before our minds,
the tenor and general scope of the
gospel,—the life and death of CHRIST
himself, and we shall be in no danger
of being led away by the incoherent
and inconsistent opinions of our mo-
dern enthusiasts.—So plain and intel-
ligible is the christian dispensation,
that he who runs, may read.—A com-
mon understanding, and an undesign-
ing heart, are sufficient acquirements
for the right understanding of our
duty both to GOD and man.—For this
is the sum of all religion.—The ne-
cessity of a good life, as well as a
sincere faith, is the substance of almost
every page in our bibles.—To give
up, therefore the necessity of these
two

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two great points going hand in hand,
—is, to give up the doctrines and
commandments of God,—for those
of men.—*Prove all things—hold fast
that which is good.*

END of SERMON II.

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two great points being in hand
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S E R M O N III.

E A S T E R - D A Y.

SERMON III

FASTERS DAY

1. COR. XV.—17.

**IF CHRIST BE NOT RAISED—YOUR
FAITH IS VAIN;—YE ARE YET
IN YOUR SINS.**

WE are now come, by a kind of gradation, to the great criterion of Christianity — for if the evidences, which can be produced in defence of the resurrection of our LORD, will not stand against every suggestion — every argument which hath been brought by Sceptic, Deist, or Atheist — the religion of JESUS CHRIST ceases to deserve our attention and regard. — On this event, himself rested the credit of his divine mission; — *By the Resurrection from the dead, he was declared to be the Son of God with power.* On this issue, therefore, every rational disciple of our crucified Saviour, will be ready to try his cause; — if he fails in this one point, let him renounce

nounce the doctrine of the New Testament, and embrace whatever other system, which may bring more certain signs, of its being the ordinance of God. — This important article of our faith — the fountain and foundation of our religion — the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead — becomes the subject of our present enquiry.

The only authority to which we can appeal for the determination of this question, is, that of the New Testament, and reason must determine between the proofs urged on the one side, and the objections, which ingenious Sceptics have stated, and on which they ground their infidelity, on the other. — That a question like this, of the first importance, may be investigated without embarrassment — we will separately consider — the *positive* evidence of our Lord's resurrection from the dead ; — the *corroborating*

borating evidence from the caution taken by the Jews, to prevent their being imposed upon by his disciples :—and the *advantages* we receive from the establishment of the doctrine of the resurrection.

St. PAUL, the author of the two Epistles to the Corinthians, is a very material witness on the positive side of the question.—To our Lord's appearance after he was risen from the dead, was owing this Apostle's very remarkable conversion from Judaism to Christianity.—A conversion which carries with it the most signal proof of his being influenced by conviction of the truth, that JESUS was the promised MESSIAH.—Prejudice and interest, had they operated on any side—must have thrown their weight into the scale of perseverance in the persecution.—The fact is—they were directly opposed by the conversion.—While PAUL was on his journey to DAMASCUS,

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with a view to forward and assist in the persecution, which was then carrying on against the Christians — he was miraculously turned from his purpose. — *Suddenly there shined round about him a light from Heaven. — And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me? — And he said, Who art thou, Lord? — And the Lord said — I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. — And Paul trembled and was astonished. —* By this admonition he was instantly struck with the injustice of his errand — he joined the disciples of CHRIST. — Behind him, he left the favor and countenance of his country; — before him was nothing but poverty and sufferings. — In consequence of this conversion, he was called to be an Apostle to teach the Gentile world — he had been brought up at the feet of GAMALIEL in the study of the law, and had *profited*

in the Jews religion above many his equals in his own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his Fathers.—While the four Evangelists use plain narrative, and record the life of Christ, in a journal of facts;—St. PAUL, in the fifteenth Chapter of the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, hath left us a master-piece of eloquence and argument. — *If Christ be risen from the dead, How can some say, there is no resurrection of the dead?*—And again—*If there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen.*—*And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.*—Here is found and just reasoning—if CHRIST is risen—the dead do rise;—if the dead rise not—CHRIST is not risen;—and the conclusion is—If CHRIST is not risen, as you *Corinthians* vainly say—then is my writing to you, as an Apostle, and your faith in CHRIST, as a people,

vain and to no purpose.——Nay, he further adds — *Then are we Apostles false witnesses of God, because we have testified, and that from God, that he raised up Christ.* —— His arguments are as clear as the noon-day sun — For how, if the dead rise not, can CHRIST be risen? — But ye all knew who they were that saw him crucified — that he died, and was buried; all their senses had told them these truths — all their senses had also evinced the resurrection of his body.

This is the epitome of St. PAUL's testimony of the resurrection of CHRIST, and the consequent resurrection of the dead. —— A testimony (already †) shewn to stand entirely clear of every ingredient of policy, or enthusiasm, and which hath of late gained addi-

* See Lord Lyttelton's elegant and masterly observations on this subject, in a letter to the late Gilbert West, Esq;

tional credit among us, from the scrutiny of some modern infidels.

Besides the testimony of St. PAUL, we should remember our Lord's appearance after his resurrection to MARY MAGDALEN, who went to anoint the body, and possibly, to drop the tear of affection over his tomb ;—he was then seen by the women returning from the Sepulchre ;—by two of his disciples, in their way to EMMAUS ;—by PETER ;—by the assembled disciples at the sea of TIBERIAS, and afterwards met them on a mountain in GALILEE, where he gave their apostolical commission ;—he was seen by the Apostle JAMES, and five hundred brethren at once.——At all these repeated times, which he manifested himself in the flesh—every beholder was convinced.——THOMAS, who was one of the number when CHRIST appeared a second time to his assembled disciples, is a single exception—he seems to have

have been more than ordinarily cautious of believing the resurrection.—He spoke openly what he thought—he declared his scruples without reserve.—St. JOHN hath told us, that THOMAS addressed himself to the other disciples, in these words,—*Except, I shall see in his hands, the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.*—At the end of eight days from JESUS's first appearing among these disciples,—*he came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, peace be unto you.*—He then particularly directed his discourse to THOMAS,—*reach hither, said he, thy finger, and behold my hands; reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing.*—The result was, THOMAS was well satisfied,—he acknowledged his belief, by answering and owning him for *his Lord,*

Lord, and his God.—In a word,—as St. LUKE writes,—*Jesus shewed himself alive, after his passion, by many infallible proofs; being seen of his apostles, and others forty days; and speaking of the things, pertaining to the kingdom of God.*

Now with respect to the corroborating evidence, arising from the caution, and circumspection of the Jews.

—It is easily to be conceived that neither pains or trouble would be spared on their parts to detect a fraud or imposition, if in this case, there had been any.——Well knowing that the nature and tendency of the doctrine of CHRIST, were levelled against their excess of rites, and ceremonies.

—But to give up what we can conclude to be only probable, for what is certain.——We are told by the writers of our Lord's life, a chain of facts, subsequent to his passion.——

JOSEPH of Arimathea, who was a
good

good man, and just,—an honourable counsellor, begged the body of Jesus from Pilate, the Roman governor, as soon as his centurion assured him that he was dead.—PILATE who had before declared that he found no fault in him,—thinking, most probably, that the vengeance of the Jews, would go no further, ventured upon a ready compliance with the request which was made to him. Then JOSEPH took the body, and wound it up in linen,—embalmed it with spices, as was then customary, and buried it in a new sepulchre, which was hewn out of a rock.—He rolled a great stone against the door, and departed.—After JOSEPH had paid the last honour to the breathless corps of the crucified JESUS,—the chief priests and pharisees went to PILATE, saying, Sir, we remember that the deceiver said, while he was yet alive,—after three days, I will come again: command, therefore, that the
sepulchre

sepulchre be made secure, until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say, unto the people,—He is risen from the dead.—

*PILATE said unto them,—Ye have a watch; go your way, and make it as sure as you can: so they went, and made the sepulchre sure;—sealing the stone, and setting a watch.—*All this precaution of the Jews,—this aversion to the benign spirit of the divine morality of the gospel,—like the scepticism of THOMAS,—argue more forcibly in favour of the truth, than if they had believed all that passed, without gratifying their suspicions,—or indulging their strong inclinations to overthrow the whole at one stroke. Let it suffice, to say,—that when MARY MAGDALEN,—MARY, the mother of JAMES,—and SALOME visited the tomb, on the first day of the week,—the stone had been removed from the door, by an earthquake:—

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the appearance of an angel sitting on the tomb, frightened away the guards, —for fear of him, the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.—The body was gone,—and they were much concerned.—Immediately, two angels stood by them, and said, that Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, was risen from the dead.—To all this weight of evidence, add, the low art, —the designing villainy of the chief priests.—When the watch, whom they had placed to guard the sepulchre,—returned into the city, on the appearance of the angel, and told them all things which were done.—They assembled with the elders,—took counsel together,—they gave large sums of money to the soldiers, saying, say ye, his disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.—And if this scheme of our's, comes to the governor's ears, we will persuade him that it is true, and secure you harmless.—What

a temptation to needy abandoned hirelings!—as was expected,—*they took the money, and did as they were taught.*—To how pitiful a shift were they driven:—and yet such was the littleness of chief-priests, and pharisees!—May it not be asked.—Is this all?—and it is all they have to urge in defence of their denial of the resurrection of CHRIST,—his disciples came by night, say they, while the guard slept, and stole the body,—and how is this account supported?—Why truly, by the acknowledged bribery of the chief-priests and elders,—backed by the very great improbability, that a whole party of soldiers should be asleep and senseless at the same moment:—and it should not be forgot,—that the soldiers went unpunished for the neglect of duty,—that the size of the stone required several hands to move it,—and that the linen napkin was found

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wrapped up in order. — These circumstances prove more than some are willing to imagine. — But enough. — All the poor chicanery of the Jews is sufficiently notorious. — and at best, leaves their tale, too bare, almost to deserve a serious reply. — All the learning and subtilty of the Jews, — and artful scepticisms of ingenious modern infidels, have yet left the resurrection an established truth, — a plain, — simple, — uncontrovertible fact.

The exprefs consequence of the resurrection, demonstrates its great advantages. — Should the whole be but a cunningly devised fable, — *your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins.* — A future state, however probable from the light of nature, and the Old Testament, — is established on sure ground in the more perfect revelation of God's will delivered in the second covenant between him and man, —

man,—and by its close connection with the resurrection of Jesus,—becomes inseparable from it.—From a reasonable and firm belief of this great palladium of christianity,—all the frowns of adversity become trifling and insignificant.—The misfortunes of this life lose their sting, or the edge of them is greatly blunted.—The burden of this probationary state is easy,—its yoke rendered light—a prospect of a better state,—an eternity before us, will overbalance every consideration,—it will make the sufferings of this world, tolerable,—and the parting with its greatest enjoyments, as a matter rather to be desired, than feared.—Are not all these great benefits arising from the resurrection of the Son of God,—worthy of the supreme being of the universe?—Here is an end,—that is answerable to the means.—This of itself would prove some high original,—it is an internal evidence,

evidence which would have its weight with any rational enquirer.

In the conclusion of our Saviour's discourse with THOMAS he said to him, *because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed:—blessed are they, that have not seen, and yet have believed,—* or, as they may be otherwise expressed;—‘No distance of time shall obliterate the great mercies obtained for man, by my sufferings.—In ages yet to come, their faith will be greater than thine, who has had personal demonstration;—and their reward shall be greater also.—Supremely blessed are they who have not seen, and yet believe in me;—who know my will, and do it.—’

Grant, O Lord! heavenly Father! that we may be so prepared to appear before *the judgment-seat of thy Son*, that we may be numbered among those

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those appointed to dwell in the habitations of the blessed, for ever and ever.

END of SERMON III.

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S E R M O N IV.

W H I T - S U N D A Y .

SERMON IV.

WILT-SUNDAY

—JOHN xvi. 7.

I TELL YOU THE TRUTH; IT IS EXPEDIENT FOR YOU THAT I GO AWAY;—FOR IF I GO NOT AWAY, THE COMFORTER WILL NOT COME UNTO YOU;—BUT IF I DEPART I WILL SEND HIM UNTO YOU.

THE history of CHRIST, terminates with his ascension, and his sending the holy spirit to the apostles.—In order,—this follows the consideration of his resurrection, and is the immediate sequel.—A very short time before our Lord took his last farewell of his disciples,—he made use of these piercing, yet consoling words.—A farewell, which, however qualified with an express promise of not deserting them,—shook all the fortitude of the most resolute of his followers:—JOHN, the best beloved, was alarmed at the approaching trial,—

which might prove too great for mere human means to withstand,—he plainly discerned that danger and difficulties would increase,—while, possibly, his powers might decrease.—And as far as their own judgment could determine for them,—their fears were certainly by no means groundless.—They had acknowledged Jesus to be the CHRIST,—they had been eye-witnesses of his miracles, and they believed.—They had acknowledged themselves his disciples, notwithstanding the numberless discouraging arguments against a public declaration of their conversion.—Hitherto, indeed,—their Lord and Master had been with them.—Though he never miraculously interposed for their protection, when any storm hung over them, (because then, their patience and perseverance would have had no trial,)—yet he was present to give countenance to their cause, and support

port their perseverance, by offering fresh objects of a reasonable faith, day after day.—Notwithstanding which they had sometimes failed,—and PETER had even denied him thrice.—The accumulated evidences of his divine mission, were, at length, irresistible inducements of their continuance in their faith and calling.—The time was now at hand, when the founder of their faith,—that bright light, which shone more resplendent, than any of the planets in the heavens, was to disappear, and vanish from before their eyes.—In such a dilemma,—a mixture of hope and despair,—our Lord spoke to them,—*I will send* (said he) *the comforter unto you.*

These general hints will serve, for the occasion of the words of our Saviour.—The time of this very extraordinary gift, was very favourably circumstanced, for its being well

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authenticated.—The Jews were then celebrating the feast of PENTECOST, *a memorial of the law, being delivered from mount Sinai.*—Great numbers were, on that occasion, collected together;—when, this (to them unexpected) miracle was wrought.—The MANNER, was as tremendous, as surprising:—*the apostles were with one accord met together in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting: and there appeared unto them, cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat on each of them:—and (continue the sacred historians) they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance.*—No possible connection between the cause and effect.—No plea, or pretence for any imposition.—The number of the apostles, had been just completed, by the choice of

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MATTHIAS in the place of JUDAS.—The twelve were, in an instant, enabled to speak many languages,—then it was, they received the gift of the HOLY GHOST.—Here we should pause, and recollect these several circumstances,—the *time*,—the *manner*, and the *effect*.—Wonderful all!—all proclaim the power, wisdom, and goodness of that Almighty God, who hath done such great and marvellous things for the whole christian world!—universal redemption, was the object of CHRIST's sacrifice.—Universal charity, and good will to mankind were the motives to this wonderful act of the Son of God.—These poor and illiterate men,—the disciples of our crucified master, were, in one moment,—able to converse with the Jews, and every other nation on the face of the earth.—This enabled them to perform that great task and commandment, which was given to them,
by

by the Son of the most high,—saying,
 —*Go, teach all nations.*——Till this
 time, they had not the power, how-
 ever well inclined in will, to discharge
 the office, they were appointed unto.
 —The impediments to the quick and
 easy communication of those most
 important facts with which they were
 intrusted, were now removed, by
 the influence of the Holy Spirit.

With respect to the nature of the
 gift of the HOLY GHOST.—A miracle,
 is something out of the ordinary
 course of nature, which is an object
 of our senses; unaccountable from
 natural causes,—yet on reasonable and
 sufficient evidence,—an object of our
 faith.—The power of working mira-
 cles, GOD hath not thought proper to
 delegate, since the first century after
 our Lord's death, to any human being,
 —as far as reading can inform us.—
 Every age, and every nation have pro-
 duced pretenders to inward light,—

but with the most glaring deficiency of every requisite.—If you ask the Romanists,—the successor of St. PETER fills the papal chair.—He is surrounded with infallibility, and wonders, though nothing but error and lying wonders mark the annals of his papacy.—Waving these, their idle pretensions,—if we seriously consider the question,—the ordinary course of nature, more clearly and evidently proves a moral governor, than prodigies and wonders.—We are exceedingly negligent in bestowing our thoughts on this matter, and view the whole very superficially.—As a fly proves a supreme independent being, as well as an elephant,—so every event in life, argues a moral governor.—Fortune shall smile on the wicked man,—and frown on the virtuous,—but,—who knoweth these men's hearts,—save the God who made them?—The favors of fortune, are

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but delusions,—since the outward and the inner man, so seldom correspond with each other.—As from the very work of creation, we may be certain that nothing less than infinite power was the author ;—so from his protection of the works of his hands, we trace infinite goodness ;—and from their respective stations,—a moral governor.—An ingenious writer hath gone further, and yet within the bounds of truth.—“ Who cannot
 “ look at a flower (says he,) ’till he
 “ frightens himself out of infidelity ?
 “ —religion is the natural growth of
 “ the works of God ;—and infidelity,
 “ of the invention of men.”*

The propriety and necessity of the particular influence and direction of the HOLY GHOST, at the first planting of Christianity, is denied by none, but those who have become infidels for want of thinking.—That necessity was

* Dr. YOUNG’s Centaur, Letter II,

was answered, by commissions adequate to the cause.—The necessity removed,—inspiration ceased.—God then left the gospel of his well-beloved Son, to stand by itself,—its own intrinsic work.—We have no reason to expect,—neither have we any cause to murmur, because visions are not sent to us,—because extraordinary and irresistible influences, are now no more among us.—The ordinary gifts of the HOLY SPIRIT are necessary for our guide,—and yet they trespass not on our free-agency,—they are known by the works which spring from them,—as a tree by its fruit.—The free-agency of man, and universal redemption are not only the doctrines of the reformation,—but most clearly of the new testament also.—As by this, we must in the end be judged,—by this we ought to live ;—not first fixing our opinions, and then wire-drawing scripture, to make it pliant

to our wills.—The holy scriptures, are the rock we must build upon; and from them alone flow the issues of life.—When our belief of the principles of Christianity carries us into the works of the law,—into the discharge of our duty to God and man,—then may we flatter ourselves that the all-directing providence hath suffered us to be partakers of the influence of his Spirit,—and it should be remembered, that, “our lives may
 “be orthodox, though our faith may
 “not.”——It is not any imagined secret impulse, which a warm imagination may conceive.—*The spirit, then beareth us witness*,—when our lives accord, and keep in harmony with the moral precepts of the gospel.—Here, is consistency!—“Without an universal obedience through the whole
 “course of our lives,—all our joys
 “and comforts, and confident expectations of heaven and happiness,
 “are

“ are but splendid delusions, and
 “ dreams,—by which, men of loose
 “ principles and practices seek to
 “ unite together, two things, which
 “ God hath put at an irreconcilable
 “ distance,—that is to say,—a wicked
 “ life here, and an happy life here-
 “ after.”*——When the command-
 ments of the Lord, are fulfilled, then
 it is,—we shall have an approving
 conscience, and pleasing prospect,—
 without the aid of the wild heats of
 enthusiasm, or the melancholy of
 superstition.

In the case of the descent of the
 HOLY GHOST upon the apostles;—
 there was a consideration, worthy of
 such a peculiar interposition of the
 Deity.—It was no way partial, or
 confined;—it answered no private or
 sinister end; it was done in so public

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* Bishop Hopkins,—quoted in Dr. Nowell's an-
 swer to *Pietas Oxoniensis*. 2d. edit. p. 166.

a manner, that there was no reason to impute any single circumstance to a frantic zeal.—In all accounts of private interviews with the Saviour of the world ;—of the extraordinary and irresistible influence of the Holy Spirit ;—and of conversations with angels,—of later date :—self-conviction attends the tale we hear.—Absurdities, and contradictions, so multiply upon our hands, when we examine into them,—that their assertions and protestations, come accompanied with answers, which at once destroy their credit.

Let us now offer up our hearts to that one GOD, whom we all acknowledge.—Praise and magnify his name, for having *inspired* the holy apostles of his Son, *for the miraculous promulgation of his will* to mankind.—Let us beg a blessing upon the whole race of ADAM, however differing in sentiment from ourselves :—and that he will
grant

grant his assisting grace to us,—to forward our own endeavours to fulfil his law:—that our minds may be clear of all rancor and ill-will to dissenters of every denomination.—If this thou, O Lord! shalt be pleased to grant,—then shall we meet with joy before the tribunal of thy Son, and dwell for ever together in the blessed mansions of thy heavenly kingdom.

F I N I S.



